Please amend the application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 2, without prejudice.

Please add the following new claims:

30. (New) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said step a) includes the steps of:

a1) obtaining a first value which is a difference between DC values of the upper left block (DC_B1) and the upper block (DC_B2);

a2) obtaining a second value which is a difference between DC values of the upper left block (DC_B1) and the left block (DC_B3);

a3) comparing the first value with the second value;

a4) selecting the DC value (DC_B2) of the upper block if the first value is larger than the second value; and

a5) selecting the DC value (DC_B3) of the left block if the first value is smaller than the second value.

31. (New) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the first value and the second value are absolute values.

32. (New) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of:

c) performing DPCM coding on the predictive DC value and the DC value of the target block, thereby generating video information; and

d) transmitting the video information to a decoder.

33. (New) A block based video coding method, comprising the steps of:

a) selecting one of DC values of a left block (B3) and a upper block (B2) of a target block (B) based on comparison result of a first value and a second value, the first value being a difference between DC values of a left upper block (B1) and the left block (B3), the second value being a difference between DC values of the left upper block (B1) and the upper block (B2); and

b) assigning the selected DC value as a DC value of the target block (B), thereby generating a predictive DC value of the target value.

34. (New) The method as recited in claim 33, wherein said step a) includes the steps of:

a1) obtaining a first value which is a difference between DC values of the upper left block (DC_B1) and the upper block (DC_B2);

a2) obtaining a second value which is a difference between DC values of the upper left block (DC_B1) and the left block (DC_B3);

a3) comparing the first value with the second value;

a4) selecting the DC value (DC_B2) of the upper block if the first value is larger than the second value; and

a5) selecting the DC value (DC_B3) of the left block if the first value is smaller than the second value.

35. (New) The method as recited in claim 33, wherein the first value and the second value are absolute values.

36. (New) The method as recited in claim 33, further comprising the step of:

c) performing DPCM coding on the predictive DC value and the DC value of the target block, thereby generating video information; and

d) transmitting the video information to a decoder.

37. (New) A block based video coding apparatus, comprising:

selection means for selecting one of DC values of a left block (B3) and a upper block (B2) of a target block (B) based on comparison result of a first value and a second value, the first value being a difference between DC values of a left upper block (B1) and the left block (B3), the second value being a difference between DC values of the left upper block (B1) and the upper block (B2); and

prediction means for predicting the selected DC value as a DC value of the target block (B), thereby generating a predictive DC value of the target value.

38. (New) The apparatus as recited in claim 37, wherein said selection means includes:

means for obtaining a first value which is a difference between DC values of the upper left block (DC_B1) and the upper block (DC_B2);

means for obtaining a second value which is a difference between DC values of the upper left block (DC_B1) and the left block (DC_B3);

means for comparing the first value with the second value;

means for selecting the DC value (DC_B2) of the upper block if the first value is larger than the second value; and

means for selecting the DC value (DC_B3) of the left block if the first value is smaller than the second value.

39. (New) The apparatus as recited in claim 37, wherein the first value and the second value are absolute values.

40. (New) The apparatus as recited in claim 37, further comprising:

DPCM coding means for performing DPCM coding on the predictive DC value and the DC value of the target block, thereby generating video information and for transmitting the video information to a decoder.

41. (New) Data stream for use in block based video coding, the data stream transmitted to a decoder, comprising:

video information generated by performing DPCM coding on a predictive DC value and a DC value of the target block, wherein the predictive DC value is generating by the steps of:

a) selecting one of DC values of a left block (B3) and a upper block (B2) of a target block (B) based on comparison result of a first value and a second value, the first value being a difference between DC values of a left upper block (B1) and the left block (B3), the

second value being a difference between DC values of the left upper block (B1) and the upper block (B2); and

b) predicting the selected DC value as a DC value of the target block (B).

42. (New) The data stream as recited in claim 41, wherein said step a) includes the steps of:

a1) obtaining a first value which is a difference between DC values of the upper left block (DC_B1) and the upper block (DC_B2);

a2) obtaining a second value which is a difference between DC values of the upper left block (DC_B1) and the left block (DC_B3);

a3) comparing the first value with the second value;

a4) selecting the DC value (DC_B2) of the upper block if the first value is larger than the second value; and

a5) selecting the DC value (DC_B3) of the left block if the first value is smaller than the second value.

43. (New) The data stream as recited in claim 41, wherein the first value and the second value are absolute values.

With respect to the following amendment to claim 1, in accordance with amendment practice pursuant to Rule 1.12(c)(1)(i), presented below is a "clean" set of "rewritten claims." A "marked-up" version of these claims are attached hereto as Exhibit 1 pursuant to Rule 1.121(c)(1)(ii).